

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated July 7, 2003. Claims 1-21 are pending. Claims 1-5, 8-17, 20 and 21 are rejected. Claims 6, 7, 18, and 19 are objected to. Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, and 18 have been amended. Claims 2, 5, 7, 13-15, 17, and 19 have been canceled. Claims 22 and 23 have been added. Accordingly, claims 1, 3-4, 6, 8-12, 16, 18, 20-23 remain pending in the present application.

Claims 4, 5, 8, and 13 are rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 5 and 13 have been canceled. Their objections are thus moot. Claims 4 and 8 have been amended according to the examiner's comments. Applicant submits that the examiner's objection of claims 4 and 8 are traversed.

Claims 6, 7, 18, and 19 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but the examiner states that these claims "would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims." Accordingly, Applicant has amended claims 1 and 3, and added claims 22 and 23.

Amended claim 1 recites the limitations of claims 1, 5, and 7.

Amended claim 3 recites the limitations of claims 3, 17, and 19.

New claim 22 recites the limitations of claims 1, 5, and 6.

New claim 23 recites the limitations of claims 3, 17, and 18.

Applicant submits that amended claims 1 and 3, and new claims 22 and 23 are thus allowable.

Claims 1-3, 9-11, 14, 21 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Armstrong et al. in view of George et al. Claims 2 and 14 have been canceled. Their rejections are thus moot. Applicant submits that amended independent claims 1 and 3 are allowable over the

cited references for the reasons stated above. Applicant further submits that claims 9-11 and 21 are allowable because they depend upon these allowable base claims.

Claims 4, 8, 13, 16, 20 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Armstrong and George as applied to claims 1, 2, and 3 above, and further in view of Pitchaikani. Claim 13 has been canceled. Its rejection is thus moot. Applicant submits that claims 4, 8, 16, and 20 are allowable because they depend upon allowable base claims 1 and 3 as amended. Amended claims 1 and 3 are allowable for the reasons stated above.

Claims 5 and 17 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Armstrong and George applied to claims 1 and 3 above, and further in view of Flammer. Claims 5 and 17 have been canceled. Their rejections are thus moot.

Claims 12 and 15 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Armstrong and George as applied to claims 1 and 2 above, and further in view of Liang. Claim 15 has been canceled. Its rejection is thus moot. Applicant submits that claim 12 is allowable because it depends upon allowable base claims 1 and 11. Amended claim 1 and claim 11 are allowable for the reasons stated above.

Therefore, for the above identified reasons, the present invention as recited in independent claims 1, 3, 22, and 23 is neither taught nor suggested by the cited references. Applicant further submits that claims 4, 6, 8-12, 16, 18, 20-21 are also allowable because they depend on the above allowable base claims.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 1, 3-4, 6, 8-12, 16, 18, 20-23 are patentable over the cited references. Applicant, therefore, respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the claims as now presented.

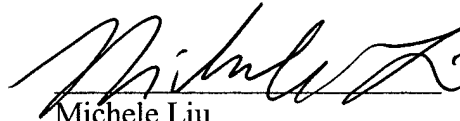
The prior art made of record and not relied upon has been reviewed and does not appear to be any more relevant than the applied references.

Applicants' attorney believes this application in condition for allowance. Should any unresolved issues remain, Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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